

Mood Boosters

- Heat a heavy bottomed 5 quart pot over medium heat. Add bacon; cook until crisp and brown, 6 to 8 minutes. Raise heat to high; add turkey. Cook, stirring and breaking up meat with a spoon, until no longer pink, 8 to 10 minutes.
- Add onion, garlic, and jalapenos; cook until soft, stirring often, about 5 minutes. Stir in spices, cook, stirring, until fragrant, 1 minute.
- Pour in tomatoes, brown sugar, 1 cup water, and salt; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer; cook, partially covered, 30 minutes.
- Add beans; continue cooking, uncovered, until meat and beans are very tender, and chili is thick, about 30 minutes more. Serve with desired toppings.

September is a naturally a transitional month and it tends to bring with it big changes. Back to school (Niki, Lara and I all have our babies starting kindergarten this year), shorter days and a slight nip in the evening air all remind us that Fall is just around the corner. A bit of melancholy is a natural response to change, and will usually pass as we adjust to the new flow of our lives.

Has a bit of “summer sadness” gotten hold of you?

Mood Boosting Foods:

1. Lemon- The smell alone is proven to lift our spirits. Squeeze a large amount of lemon in water (at least 1/4 the fruit) and sip throughout the day. The dose of Vitamin C will counteract overproduction of cortisol (stress hormone) and help ward off colds and flu.

2. Dark Chocolate- 1 oz portion will do the job! Get the highest percentage of cocoa you can find (70 % is good) and savor the piece. Scientists are not sure exactly why, but chocolate increases blood flow to pleasure centers of the brain and makes us feel good... and it tastes delicious!!!

3. Asparagus- This fantastic veggie has the highest plant source of tryptophan (yes, like in turkey). Tryptophan is used by the brain to produce serotonin (the ultimate feel good hormone). As an added bonus, the enzymes in asparagus also help us breakdown alcohol, so if you do imbibe, you'll be far less likely to get a hangover.

4. Greek Yogurt- Greek yogurt is packed with blood sugar stabilizing protein, and calcium. Both are important nutrients for mood. Plus, the probiotics in yogurt support a healthy gut environment which is crucial for how you feel and function on every level. If you consume high quality yogurt from grass pastured cows, the CLA fats in the yogurt will give your brain another boost.

Niki reminded me yesterday how powerful fitness has been in keeping her spirits up and her soul centered during her life changes. Regardless of how down she may be feeling, getting a good "sweat on" and the endorphin boost that is likely to follow always uplifts her day.

Feel Good Chili

I have swapped out the turkey in our famous chili for grass-fed beef. Much like fatty fish, grass fed beef is loaded with beneficial fats to fight inflammation and support brain health and mood, as well as provide a good dose of Vit B-12.

The beans are rich in folic acid. Add some sliced jalapeños at the end for a dose of Vit C and a little more heat!

Enjoy!!!